

Local Development Plan – Preparatory Studies: Appointment of Retail and Commercial Leisure Consultant	24th August 2016
Planning Committee	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	Outcome
Leader and Champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Elected Members will provide civic leadership to our citizens, working to promote the Borough as an attractive place to live, work, invest and visit.
Accelerating Our Economy and Contributing to Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will work with its partners to maximise business start-up opportunities and encourage existing enterprises to grow and prosper.
Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough.
Lead Officer	Sharon Mulhern
Cost:	TBA

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The importance of town centres as hubs for a wide range of land uses and activities, as well as a place to bring people together and foster a sense of community and place is recognised in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS).
- 1.2 Town centres can provide retailing, leisure, entertainment, community and business facilities and the SPPS promotes a ‘town centre first’ approach to the location of future retailing and other main town centre uses.
- 1.3 The retail and commercial leisure sectors are dynamic and the internet has created new ways of undertaking retail transactions that would, traditionally, have tended to occur in towns. The SPPS requires councils to undertake an assessment of the need or capacity for retail and other main town centre uses across the plan area. Councils must also prepare town centre health checks and regularly review these, preferably at least once every five years.
- 1.4 As part of the Local Development Plan preparation, an understanding of our town centres, their catchments, available expenditure and future development pressures is necessary. Historically, the Department of Environment appointed

specialist retail consultants to carry out this work. It also established a specialist retail team in its headquarters in Belfast to advise divisional offices in retail impact matters in relation to planning applications for retail development. The last comprehensive survey over the Borough was undertaken in 2004 to inform the Draft Northern Area Plan 2016.

- 1.5 An up to date report is required to inform the new Local Development Plan. As Members may be aware, some information relating to Coleraine town centre is collected by the Council's Place and Prosperity Section via Springboard Retail, a nationally recognised company that compiles comparative statistics, for example in relation to footfall and performance trends. Planning staff have also collected information since 2009 relating to town centres uses and vacancy levels. The survey should also be helpful in the processing of future retail planning applications where retail impact is a consideration.
- 1.6 Staff in both sections of the Council have worked together to identify which parts of a retail and commercial leisure study could be undertaken inhouse and which parts it would be beneficial to have expert guidance and input on via an experienced retail consultant, with the aim to increase the intellectual capacity of staff for the future.
- 1.7 It is accepted that, presently, there is not the expertise within the Council to undertake a robust capacity study. Therefore, a consultant should be appointed to prepare a retail and commercial leisure study to inform the Draft LDP. It is envisaged staff will undertake certain aspects of the town centre health checks utilising information already available, for example town centre uses and vacancies and footfall. The role of the appointed consultant would be to provide an overview of retailing in comparative towns, undertake household surveys to assist in determining aspects such as the catchments, available expenditure, customer views, and provide an assessment of the need for additional retail and commercial leisure floorspace over the Plan period to 2030. The consultant would also act as a 'critical friend' to Council staff in its aspects of the survey, to ensure the evidence base for the LDP is robust.
- 1.8 This approach to the retail and commercial leisure study is new but, given the availability of some of the information presently within the Council and the wish to develop staffs' understanding and knowledge in this specialist area, it is considered the best way forward for this Council.

2.0 Financial Implications

- 2.1 The appointment will incur costs. The 2004 Drivers Jonas study that informed the Draft Northern Area Plan 2016 cost in the order of £30,000.00. Given the time lapse since then, and the intention for the Council to undertake particular aspects of the study itself, it is difficult to indicate the cost of this proposed appointment. Provision is available within the Planning Section's budget. As this work will assist the Place and Prosperity Section also, up to half of the cost will be met from this budget also. It is intended the project will be complete by the end of this financial year.

3.0 Other Implications

3.1 None.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that Members endorse the appointment of a retail and commercial leisure consultant to inform the preparation of the Local Development Plan.

Appendix 1

Draft Terms of Reference for the Appointment of a Retail and Commercial Leisure Capacity Consultant.

Appointment of Retail and Commercial Leisure Capacity Consultant for Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council's Local Development Plan 2030

Draft Terms of Reference

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is seeking to appoint a consultant to assist it in the preparation of a retail and commercial leisure capacity assessment to inform its Local Development Plan. The Council is keen to develop its knowledge and skills in this area of work and, therefore, it wishes to undertake particular aspects of the project with the appointed consultant acting as a 'Critical Friend' in overseeing this work to ensure its future robustness.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council is located along the north coast of Northern Ireland. It contains the Main Hubs (as defined by the Regional Development Strategy 2035) of Coleraine and Limavady, with the Local Hubs of Ballycastle and Ballymoney. The towns provide a range of retail, service and other business activities to cater for their and their hinterland's populations. The area is also a key tourist destination in Northern Ireland, with the country's only natural World Heritage Site – the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast – within its administrative area, as well as other famous attractions such as the Bushmills Distillery and Royal Portrush Golf Club, the host of the 2019 British Open. In recent years, the area has become popular with tourists visiting film locations, such as Ballintoy Harbour and the Dark Hedges, made famous by the Game of Thrones.

2.2 The Council area is presently covered by the Northern Area Plan 2016, which was adopted by the Department of Environment in September 2015, which guides development proposals in the Borough. Although this was only adopted in 2015, the draft plan was prepared in 2001-2004, as were the associated background papers that informed the Plan. The Retail Technical Supplement was largely prepared by consultants, and was not substantially reviewed prior to the Plan's adoption. The Council has begun the preparation of the replacement to this plan with its Local Development Plan (LDP), which will cover the period from 2015 to 2030.

2.3 The purpose of the Plan is to guide new development proposals, and will include land allocations for major uses and planning policies to guide development across the Plan area. The Council published its Draft Plan Production Timetable in June this year (see Appendix 1). This sets out the indicative dates for the production of the Draft Plan's Core Strategy and Local Policies Plan, which, combined, make the LDP. The production of a LDP is regulated by legislation and regional planning policies, including the Regional Development Strategy and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS).

2.4 The main thrust of the SPPS, in terms of town centres and retailing, is to secure a town centres first approach for the location of future retailing and other main town centre uses, and apply a sequential approach to the identification of retail and main town

centre uses in the LDP and in decision making. The diversity in the range of town centres uses, appropriate to their role and function, should be protected and enhanced.

- 2.5 In preparing its LDP, the SPPS requires councils to undertake an assessment of the need or capacity for retail and main town centre uses across the plan area. Councils should also prepare town centre health checks and review these regularly. LDPs should include a strategy for town centres and retailing and contain appropriate policies and proposals that must promote town centres first for retail and other main town centre uses.
- 2.6 The SPPS also states that LDPs should:
- Define a network and hierarchy of centres – town, district and local centres, acknowledging the role and function of rural centres;
 - Define the spatial extent of town centres and the primary retail core;
 - Set out appropriate policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in the hierarchy of centres and other locations, and the factors that will be taken into account for decision making;
 - Provide a diverse offer and mix of uses, which reflect local circumstances; and
 - Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and form of retail, and other town centre uses.
- 2.7 The SPPS also states that health checks will help form an evidence base for LDPs. These will contain information on a range of indicators, including:
- Existing town centre uses, including resident population;
 - Vacancy rates;
 - Physical structure and environmental quality – including opportunities, designations constraints;
 - Footfall;
 - Retail representation;
 - Attitudes and perceptions;
 - Prime rental values; and
 - Commercial yields.
- 2.8 Council officials in the Prosperity and Place and Planning Sections have some previous experience in relation to some of these qualitative assessments of retailing in Coleraine primarily. The Council wishes to develop its expertise on these qualitative measures of assessment, together with the quantitative aspects, such as the design of the questionnaires, the identification of the catchment area, the calculation of available expenditure, turnover in convenience and comparison sales and the projection of future needs. The future capacity for commercial leisure will also need to be assessed.
- 2.9 To this end, the Council wishes to appoint a consultant to undertake the following aspects.

3.0 Consultant Input

- 3.1 The purpose of the assessment is to establish the potential need for additional retail and commercial leisure floorspace across the Borough’s 4 main towns of Coleraine, Limavady, Ballycastle and Ballymoney, over the plan period up to 2030. Given the potential impact of the British Open Golf tournament to be held in Portrush in 2019, the towns of Portrush and Portstewart are to be included in the assessment. The assessment should also provide information to guide the Council on the requirements of the SPPS, in terms of the spatial extent of town centres, the identification of primary retail cores, and supporting policies to ensure a ‘town centre first’ approach.
- 3.2 The assessment should cover both convenience and comparison retailing in its various types, and utilise the definitions employed by Experian, or other agreed source. The following steps should be undertaken in establishing the need for future retail floorspace at the base year of 2016 and up to the end of the Plan period of 2030 at five year intervals of 2020, 2025 and 2030. All sources of information should be accurately referenced.
- 3.3 The Council intends to undertake certain aspects of the assessment itself. It is anticipated the selected consultant will provide an overview to the assessment, and also act as a ‘critical friend’ to the Council in the review of the information arising from the Council’s input to ensure correct methodologies have been applied to the processes and the outcomes are accurate and robust, as these will assist in informing the consultant’s recommendations to the Council. The various areas of responsibility are identified below:

Report Content	Responsibility
<u>Overview</u>	
Provide an analysis of the retail and commercial leisure market, identifying trends in the context of the changing nature of town centres and out of centre retail parks, with particular regard to comparable towns in terms of size and catchments. The analysis should indicate the drivers for change including, for example demographics, income and expenditure, sales density increases, employment, location, size of units, foodstores; shopping and leisure, arts and culture, tourism, profile of competing centres, changes in the nature of consumer demand, commercial pressures, changing nature of town centres.	Consultant
Consider the retail offer in the Borough’s 6 main towns, in the context of successful towns that are similar in size and character to the Borough’s towns that have or are in the process of recovering from recession/regeneration.	Consultant
<u>Local Considerations</u>	
Identify the extent of the catchment areas for the Borough’s 6 main towns, inter-relationships between them, and their related projected populations over the plan period. To help define catchments, a household telephone survey is required on shopping and commercial leisure usage and patterns to determine retail catchment areas by retail type (convenience,	Council & Consultant

comparison, bulky comparison, discount etc).	
Identify the population of each catchment area.	Council
Establish the total available expenditure per head/household of the catchment area's population utilising a range of recognised sources adjusted to reflect the local circumstances of the Borough (eg from household survey/NINIS/NISRA)	Council
Adjust expenditure in response to special forms of trading and floorspace efficiencies.	Council & Consultant
Quantify existing floorspace and approved schemes within the catchment areas.	Council
Quantify existing turnover in catchment areas, and the proportion of the turnover for approved schemes that will be drawn from the catchment areas including from competing centres. Where national figures are applied, these should be adjusted to reflect the local context (eg using British Retail Consortium).	Council
Establish the levels of surplus expenditure (if relevant).	Council & Consultant
Identify the extent of leakage from the catchment areas to facilities outside, identifying where the leakage is attracted to, and also, any inflows into the catchment areas from outside, for example the extent to which retail expenditure by tourists should be factored in, with the necessary adjustments to the available expenditure if appropriate.	Council & Consultant
Convert any surplus expenditure to floor area to establish the extent of need for future provision of retail and commercial leisure floorspace by area and type, taking into account the information presented in the overview and the outcomes of the Council's Health Checks.	Council & Consultant
Assess the scope for new retail and leisure development and the potential to accommodate this in the Borough's town centres, or adjacent, or beyond.	Council & Consultant

3.4 In line with the SPPS, the report should also:

Report Content	Responsibility
Define the spatial extent of town centres and the primary retail core for each.	Council & Consultant
Identify centres in decline where change management is needed, including what needs to be done and innovative suggestions on what to do.	Council & Consultant
provide commentary on other main town centre uses as per the SPPS and the need for future growth in the town centres.	Council & Consultant
Assess the relationships between existing out of centre developments and town centres and recommend any actions considered necessary to:	Council & Consultant

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance the towns' vitality and viability; and • broaden the competitiveness of town centres. 	
Propose bespoke planning policies to complement the outcomes of the study and the SPPS, that make clear which uses will be permitted in town centres and other locations, and the factors that will be taken into account for decision making. These should include the evening and night time economy in the town centres.	Council & Consultant
Advise on whether a lower threshold of 1000 sqm gross external area should be provided above which all applications for retail or town centre type developments should be accompanied by an assessment of retail impact and need where the proposal is not in a town centre location, and justify a reduction if considered appropriate.	Consultant

4.0 Information Sources

Council Sources

4.1 There are a number of elements of the study that the Council will provide information on. These are:

1. town and local centre survey work identifying the occupiers at ground floor level as per the use class order, and vacancies in each at 2009, ??? (Planning)
2. relevant planning history from 2010;
3. relevant planning history form 2010 from neighbouring councils;
4. town centre masterplans.

Information specific to the principal streets in Coleraine town centre

1 vacancy rates for the prime retail frontages in Coleraine town centre (town centre manager);

2 Springboard data for Coleraine's prime retail frontages in relation to performance figures (sales trends) and footfall measures.

Other Information Sources

4.2 Up to date information will be expected to be used, such as NISRA, Land and Property Services, Experian Business Strategies, Department for Communities Town Centre Database, British Retail Consortium, Department for Infrastructure – Transport, Police Service NI, Office for National Statistics, Northern Ireland Retail Consortium.

4.3 The household telephone survey methodology and size will be agreed with the Council.

5.0 Council's Input

5.1 As part of this project, the Council will undertake the following aspects:

- Town Centre Health Checks for 6 main towns, with lesser information collected for the remaining 5 towns;
- Review of existing zonings and changes where necessary in light of the study outcomes;
- Assess the capacity of the existing town centre to accommodate new development;

- Call for sites – assessment of these – (in combination with consultant);
- Identification of locations, particularly under-utilised sites, where retail, commercial leisure and other main town centre uses should be focused and strategies to develop and strengthen town centres.

6.0 Timetable

- 6.1 The report should be completed no later than 3 calendar months from the date of appointment, with 2 months to prepare the draft report and 1 month for adjustment.
- 6.2 The consultant will work closely with the Council and present interim reports on a monthly basis. A draft final report should be presented no later than 1 calendar month before the contract end date. Presentations of the final report to Members and the Senior Management Team may also be required.

7.0 Format of Report

- 7.1 The report should be presented both electronically and on paper. It should comprise:
- An executive summary
 - A bound A4 report in colour (maps may be presented in A3) (10 Copies)
 - A bound and unbound background survey report including survey data
 - All appropriate technical appendices including any appropriate maps
 - A CD incorporating all of the above.
- 7.2 All material, documents etc will become the property of the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and all rights such as copyright will become its property.

8.0 Study Management

- 8.1 The client is Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.
- 8.2 The appointed consultant will be expected to consult with local and national agents and other parties as may be deemed appropriate and undertake consultation to determine if there are any independent or national retailers wishing to expand or open businesses in the Borough's town centres.
- 8.3 The Council expect the study to commence immediately after the selection of the successful consultant and to be completed no later than three months from this date. It is expected the surveys will be undertaken at such time and in such a manner as to ensure the existing patterns of shopping behaviour and retail consumer expenditure flows within the plan area are established. The actual survey periods will be discussed further with the appointed consultant.
- 8.4 The appointed consultant(s) will be expected to work closely with the Council's Development Plan team and Place and Prosperity team, which are based in Coleraine. The consultant(s) will be expected to provide a monthly interim report on progress/issues arising, and a draft final report 4 weeks before the agreed contract end date. They may also be required to present their findings to Members and the Senior Management Team, which may include attendance at evening meetings.

8.5 Any delay in the completion of the study beyond the end date will be subject to a daily financial penalty at a charge based on the consultant's hourly rate specified in the tender submission.

9.0 Future Involvement

9.1 The appointed consultant(s) may be required to participate in any Independent Examination (IE) to the LDP in relation to objections and representations related to the LDP's policies and proposals arising from the study. It is anticipated that this would involve up to 10 working days including preparation of evidence and attendance at the Independent Examination over both stages of the LDP process. The IE work requirement must be included in the total price submitted in the bid. No additional payment shall be made for participation at the IE, irrespective of the time or the workload involved.

10.0 Format of Tender Submission

10.1 Four copies are required. The submission should be no more than 10 sides of A4 at size 12 Arial font and should include the following:

- An outline of the proposed methodology and sources of information and partner (if appropriate) to undertake the telephone survey work;
- An outline of the proposed timetable including a breakdown of each stage of the work and the intended hours of direct contact with Council staff;
- An outline of the proposed 'critical friend' approach to Council staff;
- A detailed breakdown of the composition of the proposed team, including the time devoted to the project by each member of the consultancy team. This should also include details of the relevant skills and experience in relation to the service provided;
- The total cost of the project on a **fixed price** basis. This should include details of **all expenses including travel costs**.

11.0 Evaluation Criteria

11.1 Bids will be assessed on the basis of the Pass/Fail criteria under the Assessment Criteria set out in Appendix 1.

Requirements

11.2 Tenderers should be able to demonstrate the following:

- RTPI corporate membership;
- Previous relevant experience including three similar projects within the last five years;
- Professional indemnity/liability insurance required at least £500,000.00

11.3 The contract will be awarded on a fixed price basis, to incorporate all of the identified work outlined above.

12.0 Payment Details

12.1 The appointed consultant may invoice for part payment for work completed at the end of the two month stage on the Council's receipt of the draft report, and for final payment at the end of the three month stage on the Council's receipt of the final report.

13.0 Formal Contact Points

13.1 If you require clarification on points concerning the Terms of Reference, please contact Sharon Mulhern on 028 7034 7244 or by email at Sharon.Mulhern@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

13.2 If you require clarification on contractual matters, please contact Robin Brown on 028 7034 7126 or by email at Robin.Brown@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Proposed Scoring Matrix for the Award of Tender

The following scoring criteria will be used to assess the full tender submissions.

Consultant's Name		
Initial Assessment	Pass	Fail
RTPI Membership		
Previous relevant experience including 3 similar projects within the last 5 years		
Professional indemnity/liability insurance		
Declaration of any potential conflicts of interest in any retail or commercial leisure developments in Northern Ireland.		
The tenderer should provide details on how they will deliver the requirements outlined in the Terms of Reference. Tendering organisations should include:		
1. Provision of mentoring and practical/technical support		
2. A project delivery plan highlighting the various stages of the assignment including in detail:		
a. The timetable;		
b. The team members and their respective roles and responsibilities;		
c. Total number of consultancy hours spent on project;		
d. Presentation to Elected Members and Senior Management Team		
e. Up to 10 working days including preparation of evidence and attendance at Independent Examination over both stages of the LDP process.		
3. Details of potential risks involved in the management and delivery of this project and the proposed contingency plans to deal with such risks.		
4. Details of the quality control mechanisms that the tendering organisation will put in place throughout the delivery of the project.		
5. Overall fixed total cost (100%).		